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A P L E A

FOR THE

ANTIQUITY OF HERALDRY,

WITH AN ATTEMPT

TO EXPOUND ITS THEORY

AND

ELUCIDATE ITS HISTORY.

BY

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE text of the following pages formed part of a paper written for publication in the forthcoming sixth volume of the *Sussex Archæological Collections*; but being of too general a nature for a work of purely local interest, the article, "On the Origin of the Arms of some Sussex Families," to which they were introductory and explanatory, appears without them; and they are published in this manner, as an independent Essay, for the perusal, more appropriately, of heraldic students.

The copious notes which are subjoined, have been subsequently added, as illustrations and elucidations of the text. Before, however, they were written, the text was already in type, or it would have been re-constructed, embodying the new and argumentative part of the notes, and thus making the entire Essay more continuous and compact, and less tautologous.

*June, 1853.*



## A P L E A

FOR THE

## ANTIQUITY OF HERALDRY.

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Hereditary family arms prevalent in all ages and countries—The colours and devices painted on the bodies and shields of savages, distinctions of tribes and clans, originally the personal adoption of chieftains, transmitted from father to son, and to succeeding tribes, the origin, for the most part, of all subsequent national and family arms—The “parti-coloured shields” of the ancient Germans, mentioned by Tacitus, of this character, and all such, and similar modern armorial bearings, an unbroken inheritance from the Teutonic chiefs—Modern European blazonry, being these alone, or in composition with other devices of subsequent adoption, or of ancient inheritance from the nations of antiquity, the whole varied infinitely by colour, form, number, and modes of display—National arms, in general, originally personal—Testimonies to the existence of family heraldry among the ancients, with instances; its hereditary character—Many Welch coats of arms probably of Roman-British origin—The scanty notices to be met in the remains of ancient and mediæval literature, as numerous relatively as those to be found in the literature of the present day—Prevalent erroneous notions of modern heraldry refuted—Arms borne at the Conquest proved by a *reductio ad absurdum*—as a rule hereditary—changed only on marrying a heiress, or a wife of superior rank—“Differences” not arbitrarily assumed, but taken from the maternal or uxorial coat—The family and national ensigns of subjugated nations, except in few cases, discontinued or prohibited, and now unknown.—The horse prevalent in Anglo-Saxon blazonry, in Anglo-Norman arms very rare, an indirect proof of the existence of the former—Canting arms generally taken by *novi homines*—Family relationship alone, and not the feudal connexion (which was a coincidence not the cause) the source of new coats of arms.

RECENT archæological research and discovery have done little, if anything, to elucidate the obscurity of the origin of modern family heraldry; and as conjecture seems exhausted, the settled judgment of the day admits the science to have originated at no earlier period than when the amplest positive evidence commences. To use the words of one of the

authors of the 'Pictorial History of England,'—"Most writers on the subject, worthy of attention, consider the date of the eleventh century as the period when armorial bearings, properly so called, became the distinctions of the royal and knightly families of Europe, but until the middle of the twelfth we have no positive authority for their existence in England. The rude and fanciful figures upon the shields of the Normans in the Bayeux tapestry can no more be called coats of arms than the better executed lions and griffins on the bucklers of the Greeks and Romans," (vol. i, p. 640.) These views are entertained by the most recent writers on the subject, by Lower, Planché, &c. But their argument is a negative one, and therefore inconclusive. The old writers on heraldry introduced so much that was fanciful and absurd in their speculations, that they brought discredit on the whole science, and on every statement that was not supported by positive sensible proof.<sup>1</sup> And not being imbued with the spirit of the Baconian philosophy, but retaining the old leaven of implicit credulity and extravagant hypotheses, their unbounded faith has pushed their successors of the present day into the opposite extreme of rigid scepticism. Because *some* traditions are unfounded,<sup>2</sup> *some* statements untrue, they indiscriminatingly believe in none: Homer and Robin Hood are myths; the Battle Abbey Roll never existed; and we are

<sup>1</sup> Arms were given to Jupiter, Osiris, and Hercules. The characters in Scripture had bearings assigned to them. Noah bore azure, a rainbow proper; Japhet, azure, an ark proper. The *colours* of the shield and of the charges indicated moral qualities; gold denoted longevity; silver, fame; gules, resolution; azure, wit; vert, joy; sable, abstinence, &c. The silver mullet in the arms of the De Veres is said to have been there placed from the circumstance of a white star having alighted upon the standard of Aubrey de Vere, when engaged in a fight with the Saracens! and the three red roundels in the arms of the Derings are said to have originated from the circumstance of one of the family being found slain on the battle field with three bloody spots on his shield!

<sup>2</sup> Traditions, however, generally rest on *some* truth; it is sometimes wilful, but oftener negligent perversion and exaggeration that falsify them and make them

untrustworthy. The alleged Saxon origin and early eminence of the Ashburnhams seem to have arisen in this manner. Their *maternal ancestors*, the Criolls, were all that is predicated of the Ashburnhams, but the latter family, *eo nomine*, were not distinguished at the time and in the way stated. (Vide *Suss. Arch. Collections*, vol. VI, p. 84). Thus, many families are said to have possessed such an estate from the time of the Conquest, whereas it is only true of the family of some maternal ancestor. The illustrious race of the Nevills, as the name would imply, are popularly regarded as a Norman family, whereas their direct male ancestry is Saxon, the name of Nevill being at an early period adopted on marrying a heiress of Norman lineage. But the noble family of Stanley, though Saxon in name, is of Norman origin, their present patronymic being taken, as in the case of the Nevills, on marriage with a heiress.

only to believe what we see—what fragments of evidence have escaped the wreck and spoliation of ages. They are afraid to launch out into the wide sea of speculation lest they should lose themselves in the fogs and mists of the Unfathomable and the Unknown.

Historical testimonies to the early existence of modern heraldry are scanty. The earliest, and undoubtedly the most important, is the passage from Tacitus (*De Mor. Ger.* vi): *Scuta tantum lectissimis coloribus distinguunt*; thus indicating the use, by the Germans, of *parti-coloured* shields. The Emperor Charlemagne is said, by his biographer, to have *regulated* the use of armorial bearings. The partizans of the Guelphs and Ghibellines were distinguished by these devices. Selden says escutcheons and arms were used on golden seals by the kings, and on wax by the subjects, of France, between the years 600 and 700. Beckman affirms that regular arms may be found on the shields of Clothaire, Dagobert, Pepin, &c.; and in the *Leges Hastiludiales* of Henry the Fowler, we find all persons prohibited from running in the lists who could not prove their "*insignia gentilitia*" for four generations, which undoubtedly means ensigns of gentility. Edward the Confessor first introduced the custom of using arms on seals; and it was confined to the royal use till after the Conquest, when it began to be used by the nobility. William the Conqueror encouraged, but under great restrictions, the bearing of arms.<sup>3</sup> M. Pautet, in the Introduction to his admirable little '*Manuel du Blason*,' produces more than half a dozen authentic instances of regular armorial bearings, on seals, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, of individuals whose descendants continued to use the same ensigns. The earliest of these is as far back as the year A.D. 1000, and after remarking that the Monk of Marmoutier, who wrote a History of Geoffry, Count of Anjou, in the year 1100, speaks of heraldry as a long-established usage in noble families, M. de

<sup>3</sup> These notices, the authorities for many of which, however, are not cited, are from Dallaway's Heraldry, and the able and elaborate article on Heraldry in the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, the author of which here and there discloses a bias (which his statements warrant) to many of the doctrines in this essay.

The notices quoted are probably only

a few of those to be met in such authors of the mediæval times as we possess; it is very unlikely that all these have been closely examined for the purpose, and the works and fragments that have been discovered or published of late years have yet to be searched, for passages that would throw light on the subject.

Courcelles, the learned continuator of 'L'Art de vérifier les Dates,' who is the authority chiefly relied upon, thus sums up his opinion: "From all that has been said on the origin of armorial bearings, we may conclude that they are to be undoubtedly traced up to the end of the tenth century; that they are to be found in use by several great families long time previous to the introduction of tournaments; that the banners and heraldic escutcheons constituted, so to speak, the basis of the jurisprudence of these military pageants; in short, that the Crusades, begun in 1096, appear to have made armorial bearings common to every knight who embarked in these expeditions; and that it is subsequently that they became hereditary in almost every family of chivalric origin." This is the argument, so far as it depends on written contemporary testimony, and on the evidence of seals themselves. The only objection that is entertained—that can be entertained—to the former is, that it is unsupported by any corroborative proofs, such as earlier seals than those produced, rolls of arms, sculptured escutcheons, or the like. But why should this be necessary? What antecedent improbability is there in the existence for centuries, among the Germanic tribes of *devices on shields and on banners, that were transmitted from father to son, of such simple elements as in the thirteenth century were regularly made the subject of the science of heraldry?* These emblems are as old as war, and as universal. Every nation, every people, every tribe exhibited them.<sup>4</sup> The children of Israel displayed

<sup>4</sup> Diodorus informs us that the Egyptian standard consisted of the figure of an animal at the end of a spear. The goat, which is made by Daniel the emblem of the Macedonian empire, was, it appears, the sign depicted on the standard of that people. The ancient standard of Persia was, as we learn from Xenophon, an eagle displayed on a shield. This eagle was the royal badge of Persia from the time of Cyrus the Great to that of Artaxerxes Longimanus, perhaps longer. The proper royal standard of that country, however, for many centuries, until the Mohammedan conquest, was a blacksmith's leathern apron, around which they had at one time been rallied to victory. The eagle was the well-known standard of the Romans. The owl, the bird consecrated to Minerva, tutelary goddess of Athens, was the adopted emblem of that

state, and appears on the Athenian coins and medals. Corinth bore a Pegasus; Tyre, a palm-tree; Antioch, a ram and a star; Nicomedia, a trireme and two turrets; Chios, a sphinx.

The national emblem of the Turkish empire is and was, to speak heraldically, azure an increscent, argent; that of Persia, a sun orient proper, behind a lion couchant or. The crescent has been probably derived to the Turks from their Scythian ancestors.

After Trajan's conquest of the Dacians the Romans adopted as a trophy the dragon, which was a general ensign among barbarians. (Encyclo. Metrop. and Pictorial Bible.)

"The dragon forms a part of the fictitious arms of King Arthur, and another early British king bore the surname of Pen Dragon, or the dragon's head. The

the ensigns of their fathers on their tents.<sup>5</sup> The Greeks and the Romans ornamented their bucklers, and their banners bore devices.<sup>6</sup> But it is contended these were not *heraldic* ensigns; we do not hear of chevrons, and bends, and cantons,

standard of the West Saxon monarchs was a golden dragon on a red banner. In the Bayeux tapestry a dragon on a pole repeatedly occurs near the person of King Harold. It was an early badge of the Princes of Wales, and was also assumed at various periods by our English monarchs. Henry III used it at the battle of Lewes, in 1264." (Lower's Cur. of Her., p. 95.)

Prescott, speaking of the ancient Mexicans, says (i, 38): — "The national standard, which has been compared to the ancient Roman, displayed in its embroidery of gold and feather work the armorial ensigns of the state. These were significant of its name, which, as the names of both persons and places were borrowed from some material object, was easily expressed by hieroglyphical symbols. The companies and the great chiefs had also their appropriate banners and devices, and the gaudy hues of their many-coloured plumes gave a dazzling splendour to the spectacle."

We are told that Artyrius, king of the Heruli, having started as a soldier of fortune under Alexander of Macedon, sailed in a ship bearing for its device or sign a bull's head, and that ultimately, settling in the states of Mecklenburg, he assumed this as his cognizance. Hence the arms of Mecklenburg are at present, *or, a bull's head, guardant sable, horned and ringed through the nose argent, and ducally crowned gules*. These are also the arms of Rostock, except that the bull is not guardant.

A like traditional legend obtains concerning the arms of Russia, Germany, and Poland; the last now lost, the second merged in those of Austria. It is said that the eagles taken from the three legions of Varus, destroyed by the Germans, fell respectively into the hands of the native Germans and their Sarmatian and Scythian auxiliaries, which nations accordingly adopted each of them an eagle for an ensign.

The treasure story is said to have been added to the arms of Scotland by Charles V, on the occasion of his league with Maximilian. The sentiment symbolized by this addition was that the lilies of France

should always protect the lion of Scotland. (Ency. Metr.)

All writers on heraldry make a distinction between personal or family heraldry and national heraldry, under which latter designation are classed all kinds of military standards. But it will be seen the whole scope of the reasoning in this essay is to derive all these kinds of devices from one source, personal adoption, originally for personal distinction. A successful warrior, as William the Conqueror, made his personal or family ensigns the national standard; others of cognate origin (as in the case of the Rouals or Rushouts, descended from the Dukes of Normandy), retaining and transmitting their own all the same. The exceptions to this rule are in such cases as that of Napoleon, who in adopting the eagle took neither his own family ensigns nor those of any of the former kings of France; that of the United Provinces, who devised for their national standard the significant emblem of a lion grasping in his paw seven arrows; and in that of the United States of America, who blazon on their flag as many stars and stripes.

<sup>5</sup> The Rabbinical writers inform us that these, amongst others, were a lion, an ox, an eagle grasping a serpent, and a man. See a learned and elaborate note on the ensigns of the twelve tribes of Judah, and on the standards of ancient kingdoms, in the 'Pictorial Bible,' vol. i, p. 329.

<sup>6</sup> According to Æschylus, Tydæus bore on his shield a full moon, surrounded with stars; Capaneus, a naked man holding a lighted torch, with a motto; Eteocles, an armed man ascending a ladder placed against a tower, with a motto; Hippomedon, Typhon, vomiting smoke and fire, surrounded by serpents; Parthenopæus, a sphinx, holding a man; and Polynices, justice leading an armed man, with a motto.

Gems and statues furnish us abundantly with the forms of animals, &c., used as *crests*. Turnus is described by Virgil as bearing for his crest a chimæra; and Corvinus, in the poem of Silius, exhibits on his helmet a crow. To show that this was an hereditary bearing, it is described

amongst these people. Perhaps not ; for we know very little of what they were, or what they were not ; but going so far as to presume the existence amongst every people, who in their early state were divided into tribes and petty principalities, of hereditary symbols, very little differing from European blazonry—for this is by no means improbable from analogy, and cannot be denied—a very good reason, independent of the remoteness of time and the destruction of most of the material remains and writings of antiquity, may be given why such devices should not have been perpetuated, but, on the contrary, discouraged and extinguished, viz., that as party badges, and distinctions of rival septs and clans, their maintenance would be a hindrance to the aggregation of states, and the consolidation of an empire.

We need not wonder at the omission of any allusion to armorial bearings in the Saxon literature, or indeed in that of any people. In our own time, coats of arms meet us every day, and at every step, and every turn. They are painted on

as *ostentans ales proavita insignia pugnae*.

The story of Io appeared on the shield of her descendant Turnus ; the swan's plume on the shield of Cupavo indicated his descent from Cynus ; and the hydra on the shield of Aventinus declared him the progeny of Hercules. The family device was frequently imprinted on the hilt of the sword. The following passage from Seutonius offers unquestionable testimony to the existence of hereditary family devices among the Romans :—*Vetera familiarum insignia*, says the historian, speaking of Caligula, *nobilissimo cuique ademil ; Torquato torquem ; Cincinnato crinem Cn. Pompeio, stirpis antiqua, magni cognomen*. The persons mentioned were probably the heads of the several families, who alone were accustomed to wear these ensigns, and therefore alone could lose them. *Cognomina*, too, were well known to have been hereditary. (Encyclo. Metrop.)

In the 'Pictorial History of England' (i, 39) is an engraving of a design from the column of Trajan, where the shields of the Roman warriors present, in the devices with which they are charged, a remarkable resemblance to those of mediæval times.

In Maitland's 'Church in the Catacombs' are given several epitaphs of the early Christians at Rome, where are figured objects that closely resemble the

name of the deceased family, as a lion for Leo, &c. And in the volumes on Pompeii in the 'Library of Entertaining Knowledge' (vol. i, p. 162) is an engraving of a brazier, stamped with the figure of a cow, and inscribed with the name of "M. Nigidius *Vacula*." The following remarks of the author illustrate our subject :—"Varro, in his book upon Rural Affairs, tells us that many of the surnames of the Roman families had their origin in pastoral life, and especially are derived from the animals to whose breeding they paid most attention. As, for instance, the Porcii took their name from their occupation as swineherds ; the Equarii, of horses ; the Tauri, of bulls, &c. We may conclude, therefore, that the family of this Marcus *Vacula* were originally cowkeepers, and that the figures of cows so plentifully impressed on all the articles which he presented to the baths, are a sort of *canting arms*, to borrow an expression from heraldry, as in Rome the family *Toria* caused a bull to be stamped on their money." The coins of the Greeks and Romans, indeed of every people, exhibit devices that have doubtless a significant meaning, and, there is scarce a doubt, are heraldic in their character. A collection of such would form rich materials for a view of the *Heraldry of All Nations*.

carriages; they are to be seen in almost every church in stained glass; they are in daily use on seals, and with crests, or the latter alone are to be found on the note paper, the knives and forks, and spoons, and on the buttons of the livery servants of the whole gentry of the kingdom. Let us imagine a few seals or crested spoons discovered by some Australian antiquary a thousand years hence, and let us imagine a few copies or even volumes of a newspaper, with a few hundred volumes of history, memoirs, and romances, rescued from the "wreck of matter," and forming the sole remains of our literature. What curious speculations would be made on the use of these strange devices! Who would believe they were in almost universal use among us? Sceptics would triumphantly refer to our newspapers and novels. Surely, they would say, such household emblems would be constantly spoken of in every journal, in every work in which manners and customs were alluded to, if they were of such general use. And yet the most lynx-eyed antiquary would not probably find the blazonry of a single family ever mentioned in the *Times* or in any book of general literature.

We know that the Greeks and Romans had libraries, and doubtless compiled catalogues of those libraries; yet not a solitary document of this description is to be found in the whole range of classic literature; but no one therefore concludes that the ancients had neither libraries nor catalogues of them. *De non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio*, may be a good legal maxim, but will not apply to archæology. If we search for a modern will, and do not find it, we infer that the party never made one, because we know the register is perfect, and that if one existed it would appear; but as so little has escaped the devastations of bygone ages, it would be absurd to conclude that nothing existed of which we do not happen to possess some remains or specimens.

In advancing a theory of the origin of heraldic insignia there is very little difficulty; a simple and feasible one is suggested by Tacitus, who, as we have seen, speaks of the Germans as displaying *parti-coloured shields*. Now, our oldest coats are well known to be the simplest: *chequy*,<sup>7</sup> *lozengy*, *barry*, *bendy*,

<sup>7</sup> This was probably the origin of the *plaids* of the Scottish clans, the ensigns

on shields and banners being also displayed on the military dress of warriors.

*paly, quarterly, gyronny, &c.* are the bearings of some of the oldest European families; the first in the noblest colours, or and *azure*, being the bearing of the ancient and princely house of Vermandois. These coats precisely answer to the description of Tacitus; and knowing the tendency in human nature, to transmit from father to son a symbol or name that had become honourable, what is more natural, more likely, more in accordance with universal usage, than that these simple family distinctions, known to be borne by noble houses at least in the eleventh century, should be the hereditary family badges, displayed on the shields of warrior chieftains among the Teutonic tribes, and transmitted with sacred reverence to their sons and grandsons? And what would be so easy, so simple, and so natural as the formation of the great majority of the ancient coats by succeeding generations, as the branches of a family increased, new conquests were made, and alliances entered into? <sup>8</sup> In this way *Gyronny*

According to Snorro Sturleson, Magnus Berfetta, son of Olaf Kyrre, who became king of Norway, A. D. 1093, bore when he invaded Ireland, gules a lion or on his shield and *surcoat* (Ency. Metr.) In the Pictorial History of England (i, 139) is an engraving from a plate in Sir S. Meyrick's 'Ancient Costume of the British Islands' of a design taken by him from some Danish horns of gold. It consists of two warriors with shields, one with a spear and shield: the latter exhibiting a star of seven points; the other has a sword, but the face of his shield is averted; on his surcoat, over his chest, is a star. The Picts and other barbarians *painted* their bodies, probably in the same parti-coloured way as the Germans did their shields.

<sup>8</sup> Every topographer, genealogist, and herald, has entertained the feudal theory of the formation of derivative coats; no one has hitherto ventured to affirm or suspect that the feudal connection had nothing to do with the origination of a new coat of arms. Yet investigation repudiates this long and universally prevalent notion, as indeed might, at any time, *à priori* reasoning on the objects and extent of the feudal relationship. For every topographer well knows that a tenant *in capite* was frequently sub-tenant to one or more tenants *in capite*; that sub-tenants, who were not tenants *in*

*capite*, held of different chiefs in different counties; that by marriage, sale, forfeiture, and exchange, fiefs, both large and small, constantly changed hands, much more frequently than is generally thought. How, then, could the tenant be said to have adopted his coat armour from his feudal lord? Whose, of two or more chiefs, was he to imitate? Many arms are compounded, it is true, and therefore are derived from more than one source; but the great majority of those of the early periods are simple and unchanged, in the chief line, for generations. Theoretically, then, it will be seen, this mode of deriving armorial bearings could not have been carried out; and the *actual practice* of the times, as ascertained by investigation, at once refutes this long cherished theory, and proves to be what, theoretically would be pronounced to be the simplest and most explanatory, viz., a derivation by *family relationship*. The feudal connection was a coincidence, not the cause; in the time of the Conqueror, as appears by Domesday, a nearly invariable coincidence, a great baronial proprietor of course sub-infeudating his sons and sons-in-law in preference to strangers; subsequently, in the time of Henry III, as appears by the Testa de Nevill, a rarer coincidence, from the changes that a century and a half had produced; so that it will be found, in that monarch's time, few of



would be formed as a further distinction on *Quarterly*, which itself would be a distinction from a plain shield;<sup>9</sup> the sons of chiefs bearing any of these would vary the colours. When the most obvious divisions of the shield were exhausted, after

the tenants of a barony were relatives of their chief, or bore similar coat armour.

In every instance where the alliances and their arms can be ascertained, investigation proves that family relationship *alone* (with few exceptions) was the source of each new coat of arms. And this fact is of immense importance in affording clues, and in leading to discoveries in topography, genealogy, and heraldry. It proves, by the strongest presumptive evidence, that arms were borne at the Conquest, and it is a clue, *almost invariably to be relied upon*, in tracing the original connection of families, though of different names and countries. Thus, assuming that all families bearing a bend and its derivatives had a common origin, research establishes (except where evidence is wanting and probability alone is warranted) the following interesting relationships.

Osborn de Crespon had William Fitz-Osborn, who bore a fess and a bend; he was Earl of Hereford and died 1070, and was succeeded by his son, who dying s. p., the next earl, a relation, took the name of Sudeley and bore *two bends*. Miles Crispin, created Earl of Hereford, who ob. 1143, bore *two bends*; Margaret, his sister and co-heir, married Humphrey de Bohun, whose descendant, Earl of Hereford, bore a bend *cottised* between six lions. The D'Oyleys, barons temp. William I, bore a bend, and their descendants *two bends*; they were allied by marriage with the Crispins, and were probably previously near relations, and both families were Constables of England. (See Hist. of the D'Oyley Family, and the Topographer and Genealogist).

A sister of Osborn de Crespon married Walter de St. Martin, who bore a bend, (taking the arms of his wife, as being probably of a higher family). His descendant, the Warrens, relinquished this bearing on marriage with the house of Vermandois; but previously Drew de Monceux married Edith de Warren, from whom probably the Monceuxs took the bend which they bore. Another daughter married Ernisius de Colunchiis, who may have been Ernisius de Burun of Doomsday. The Byrons, his descendants, bore *three bends*.

The chequy of Vermandois and Warren was thus adopted by their descendants, the Earls of Worcester, the Newburghs, (Earls of Warwick) the Clintons, the Cliffords, and many others.

The chevrons of the Clares were thus adopted, with variations of colour and form, by their descendants, the Watvilles, Wyvilles, Fitz-Walters, Mertons, Fitz-Hughs, Walpoles, &c.

This clue being followed of tracing families of different names, but bearing the same arms, has established the common origin of the families of Weston, Deane, Morley, and Wantley, all originating in Sussex, and the fact that the estates giving their names, all belonged to one great proprietor, and not to many distinct owners, as otherwise would appear. It has also explained that heraldic puzzle, the leopard's head jessant a fleur-de-lis, it being no other than a *corruption* of a leopard's head erased ducally crowned, and makes it probable that this common ancestor was a cadet of Cantalupe, who bore three leopards' heads jessant fleurs-de-lis. (See the paper in *Suss. Arch. Collections*, vol. VI, p. 81, whence the substance of this essay is detached.)

<sup>9</sup> Amanjeu II, Sire D'Albert, 1099, bore a plain shield, *Gules*, as did the Viscounts of Narbonne. A plain shield *Or*, is said to have been the ancient arms of Arragon. The ancient Welch princes and chieftains are said to have borne *coloured shields* without any devices. See a paper on the 'Antiquity of Welch Heraldry' in the first volume of the *Cambrian Archaeological Journal*.

But it is not improbable that a part, and that the most ancient, of Welsh heraldry is an inheritance from the British Romans. Certainly some of the shields of the oldest families have very different representations from those of the Saxons or Normans. Many of them are what may be termed legendary pictures, as a wolf issuing from a cave, a cradle under a tree, with a child guarded by a goat, &c. These, it will be seen, have a close resemblance, in their character, to the bearings of the Greeks and Romans.

quarterly, party per fess, per pale, &c. others would be invented, as party per chevron, the chevron itself, the canton, &c. Further differences, as the bordure, the chief, &c. would naturally follow, with new charges, as the bezant, the fleur-de-lis, the star, mullet, &c. Hereditary ensigns would in certain cases be relinquished in favour of those of a wife's family of higher rank ; <sup>10</sup> on a younger son's succeeding to an elder brother's inheritance, on obtaining the grant of a forfeited feud. And the same processes would be early introduced, that we know prevailed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, viz. compounding coats of a father's with a mother's, omitting something of each and of augmenting the charges, in commemoration of some act of valour. <sup>11</sup> This

<sup>10</sup> In the *Suss. Arch. Collections*, vol. VI, p. 75, are given several early instances of the assumption of a wife's arms, though no heiress, if of higher rank, and in Mr. Drummond's magnificent work, 'Noble British Families,' (which the writer of this essay had not seen till after it was written), a great many instances are given to show the derivation, through family relationship, of particular charges in coats of arms. It is a common notion that the differences used by younger sons were arbitrarily chosen, comprising as they did the ordinaries as well as new charges. But investigation proves this practice, as many other heraldic ones, to have been governed by strict rules, and that these differences were almost invariably taken from the maternal or uxorial coat. Thus the mullets on the arms of Sir John de Clinton were taken from the coat of Odingsell, his mother. When armorial bearings became very numerous, this practice made an insufficient distinction and produced confusion ; so it seems to have early given way to the custom of *impaling* and *quartering* arms, and afterwards, for further distinction, to the use of different kinds of helmets for the different ranks of gentility, and of supporters for the nobility alone.

In the case of co-heiresses, it would seem that the elder had the principal and residuary estate of her ancestry, and that *her* husband alone, or the husband of only one co-heiress, took his wife's arms or name, or both, when such a change took place. This was the case with the families of Bohun, Fitz-Alan, and Dallyngrydge, on their respective marriages with co-heiresses. In Cartwright's *Hist. of Bramber Rape*, p. 322, an extract from a

deed is given, by which Sir John de Islebourne and his wife renounce in favour of Sir William Fyfhide, and his wife, their claim to the coat of arms, crest, and helmet belonging to their late father-in-law, Hugh de Bucy, who died 1349.

<sup>11</sup> Many charges in coats of arms that happen to have become symbols of historical renown, are often conjectured, but erroneously, to have originated from such an honourable adoption. Thus, (p. 43), Mr. Lower says, "The interest taken by the Cornish gentry, in the struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster, may account for the frequency of the rose in the arms of Cornish families." But did not the gentry all over England take equal interest in this struggle? Why should the Cornish gentry alone have adopted this symbol of warfare, or have been allowed the privilege of its exclusive use? Another and a better reason, of a general nature, may explain this circumstance. Camden remarks that the Cheshire gentry commonly bore garbs on their escutcheons, in imitation of the Earls of Chester, and the Lincolnshire gentry, cinquefoils, which were the bearings of the old Earls of Lincoln. Thus, all over England, the devices of the Anglo-Norman barons, were perpetuated and extended by their descendants. The prevalence of the rose therefore in Cornish heraldry, infallibly indicates the descent of many of the Cornish families from some great proprietor of the early Norman reigns, who bore a rose for his arms, and whose estates became parcelled out by succeeding generations. A family named de Ros occurs in Domesday as *meine lords* in Kent and other counties (though not in Corn-

explanation of the growth of armorial bearings is quite conformable to the requirements and to the capacity of even a rude and half-civilized people ; it necessitates no acquaintance with art, nor implies a feeling of refinement, and advancement in civilization. It is not to contend for exquisite artistic performances, as curiously wrought seals, or finished works of sculpture, or stately and beautiful buildings, as the productions of a barbarous age. Painting and sculpture and architecture arrive slowly at perfection ; but the *idea* and *design* of the science of heraldry is not repugnant to our notions of a simple and unlettered race. It might have been, and probably was, centuries before the use of armorial bearings was extended beyond the members of ducal and baronial houses ; the custom of tournaments, as has been suggested, would afford perhaps the first occasion to extend the use of those ensigns to every knight or person of gentle blood engaging in those amusements ; whilst the Crusades, as all admit, gave the fullest scope and expansion to the practice of bearing coat armour. And the bearings handed down by the Crusaders prove the *previous custom* of these devices, for the crosses, crescents, escallops, &c. are in many cases evident *additions* to older and simpler charges. Different rules and laws as to marshalling and varying, and taking arms probably prevailed at different times and in different countries ; usage would be frequently departed from ; disputes would arise, and confusion would creep in, when the ensigns had become numerous and widely extended ; accordingly as we are told, Charlemagne *regulated* their use, indeed, there are found in the lists of the thirteenth century so many identical coats borne by different persons of different names, though in many cases, probably of the same family, that there is little doubt, the proper differences had been cast aside, and many arms unjustly appropriated.<sup>12</sup>

wall) who bore roses for their arms, one of whom probably settled in the west : or, *Ros* in Cornish meaning a valley, may have given its designation to an indigenous family. The arms of the Boscauens, Earls of Falmouth, are a rose ; the family took their name from a manor called Boscawen-Rose, in Cornwall, a compound name which shows the estate was formerly possessed by a family named Rose. Families named Rouse and Rous occur

in the Devonshire visitations, but do not bear roses in their arms.

<sup>12</sup> It may be doubted if differences were *necessarily* taken by younger sons. If one of these settled far away from his family, a distinction in his coat armour would be superfluous. They were probably taken only by the younger sons, of persons of considerable wealth, themselves of sufficient importance to found distinct houses, and on occasions of a tournament, or the

The question of the period of the introduction of armorial bearings into England now remains to be discussed: and it is contended that no *proof* of their existence in this country before the middle of the twelfth century can be adduced;<sup>13</sup> whilst the rude figures on the shields in the Bayeux tapestry are rejected as non-heraldic. The figures are rude, it is true; but so are the horses and the men who ride them; and more could hardly be expected of smaller objects, viz. the devices on the shields. But these, notwithstanding, have an heraldic impress: there is the cross, and the bordure invecked, an animal something like a wyvern, and other grotesque representations; but not more grotesque certainly than other objects delineated, and, than many figures undoubtedly intended for arms on seals of the twelfth century and even on many of the

assemblage of an army, where it would be essential that every knight should be separately distinguished. Most if not all of the "Rolls of Arms" which we possess were made out on such occasions, and only those barons or knights who were commanders, and had knights and esquires under them, it is believed, were privileged to use banners with their arms. So many descendants of the same progenitor in early times are to be found bearing identical arms, without *any difference* in colour or charge, that some such explanations must be admitted to account for the exceptions to the rule; or it may be, out of the whole number of *armigeri*, the practice of *differencing* was exceptional. It is true, it appears otherwise from an inspection of the rolls, but these rolls were a record of the arms of the nobility and higher gentry only. Many differences were undoubtedly laid aside, and colours reversed, by a junior branch of a family, when the chief line had become extinct, or sunk into obscurity.

<sup>13</sup> Mr. Lower (p. 22) says:—"The earliest representation of arms upon a seal is of the date of 1187." But Edmondson gives a much earlier instance, that of Stephen, Earl of Richmond, A.D. 1137, who holds on his right arm a shield charged with seven fleurs-de-lis. And Collins, in his *Peerage* (v, 262) mentions a case twenty years earlier still. "Sir William Fitz-William," he says, "lord of Elmley and Sprotburgh, living 1117, makes a grant to the monks of Biland, whereto is appended a round seal, representing a man on horseback, completely armed, and

circumscribed, 'S. Willi filii Dni de Emmaleia;' and on the reverse the arms of Fitz-William, viz. lozengy." Lest the existence of this seal be doubted, a very early instance of the use of arms may be seen in the seals engraven in Watson's 'Earls of Warren,' where is represented on the seal of Waleran, Earl of Worcester, a man on horseback, bearing a banner inscribed with the chequy coat of Vermandois, the family of his mother, and who remarried the Earl of Warren. The Earl of Worcester ob. 1166. And Mr. Wiffen, in his 'Memoirs of the Early Russells' (p. 75), mentions a probably earlier instance. "I have in my possession," he says, "a fine seal in green wax, of Roger de Conyers, of the time of king Stephen, with the device of a manche in bold relief, surrounded by seven cross crosslets, the hand holding a spear head or a fleur-de-lis, around which is the legend 'Sigillum Roger de Conneris.'"

Most of the seals of the eleventh and twelfth centuries are single, and represent a knight on horseback, but from the Fitz-William specimen just spoken of it may be presumed the greater number had a reverse, or "sigillum secretum," which contained armorial bearings, and which may not always have been used, or in most cases may have been broken off and lost. The Earl of Warren, in a letter to Hubert de Burgh, (vide *Suss. Arch. Collections*, VI, 112), temp. Henry III, says, "As I have not my great seal with me, I have caused these letters to be sealed with my private seal."

thirteenth century, where the rudest sketches of animals are given, that it would be difficult to say whether they were lions, leopards, dogs, or alligators, and where the commonest ordinaries are most unintelligibly drawn. But this tapestry was the work of the Conqueror's queen and the ladies of her court, and surely, it is said, *they* would not fail, from their knowledge of the arms of the king and his nobles, to display them in their workmanship, and not fanciful devices such as we see. But allowing this intention to operate, though to do so, it is obvious, would be somewhat invidious where a selection was necessary, is it likely, after all, that these ladies would have that technical acquaintance with heraldic ensigns which would enable them accurately to introduce them in their tapestry, at a time when probably the only mode of acquiring such knowledge would be a troublesome inquiry for the device of every nobleman's banner and shield. What knowledge of heraldry have the ladies of our own age, even of the highest ranks? Beyond an acquaintance, and that not sufficient for blazonry, of their own family arms, and those of a few of their friends, what is their knowledge of the subject? And in our day these insignia meet us everywhere, on seals, on coach-doors, on church windows—and yet if half a dozen ladies were to embroider a mediæval carpet with shields of arms, and not intending to indicate any particular insignia, they would probably design some very curious patterns, having little better resemblance to regular coat armour than the devices in the Bayeux tapestry. But be all this as it may, such an apparent stumbling-block will not upset a theory supported by other arguments of great weight.<sup>14</sup> As to the absence of arms on the shields of the equestrian figures of the early Norman sovereigns, on their seals, these seals,

<sup>14</sup> In Bogue's English Edition of *Thierry's Norman Conquest* (Hazlitt's Translation, i, p. 410), is a letter from the distinguished historian on this celebrated piece of needlework. "The tradition," he says, "which assigned to queen Matilda, the execution of the piece of tapestry preserved at Bayeux, a tradition in itself quite recent, and thoroughly refuted by M. De la Rue, is now no longer admitted by any one." And he thus sums up his opinion on the controversies on the subject: "I think with the majority of the

Saxons, who have written on the Bayeux tapestry, that it is cotemporaneous with the great event it represents; I think with Mr. Bolton Corney, that it was executed at the order and cost of the Chapter of Bayeux, and I add as a conjecture of my own, that it was manufactured in England, and by English workers, according to a design transmitted from Bayeux." This view of the case, therefore, considerably strengthens the argument in the text.

it must be remarked, are very rudely executed, and the shields in general exhibited with their face out of sight; but where otherwise, the minute workmanship required in the delineation of a coat of arms would hardly be expected where all is so rude and ill done. But it is triumphantly asked by those who will not admit the existence of armorial bearings in England at the time of the Conquest, or anteriorly, how is it that we do not find any traces or notices of them on tombs, on buildings, on seals, on ornamented MSS., or any roll of arms, all which evidences are so abundant in a subsequent period? The reason is pretty plain: the state of the arts was too low; custom had not given them the wide-spread uses and modes of display which afterwards grew up; and as to the rolls, their former existence may be safely presumed, and their loss with other documents is easily explained. If it be insisted, that it is strange the customs in full force in a later age might well be supposed to have originated with armorial bearings themselves, not to revert to the reason for this before given, it may be asked in reply, how is it that the manufacture of glass was known to the Romans and other nations, long before windows were made of it? How is it that the earliest stone coffins are plain, that they afterwards became ornamented, and only after a long interval, inscribed with some written notice of the deceased? Custom, or, more properly speaking, the *state of the arts*, would not admit of it. Besides, customs are hardly to be reasoned about. What is more unaccountable than fashion? And how rash it is to settle what *ought* to have been the custom, what *must* have been, what *should* have been the feelings and fancies of a race who lived nearly a thousand years ago, very different from ourselves in habits, dispositions, and the influences by which they were surrounded. Why did not the fashion of setting up coats of arms in stained glass in the windows of private houses begin earlier? Why did it go out, and their use on coach panels and on seals continue? <sup>15</sup> It is clear, then, that the existence of any usage is not to stand or fall, according to the presence or absence of certain collateral and incidental commemorations

<sup>15</sup> Why were deeds, down to the thirteenth century, and even much later, wholly without date, either A.D. or of the king's reign? Why did not the cus-

tom of embroidering arms on the surcoat of the male and on the dress of the female, begin much earlier, and why did it cease so soon?

of it which we may choose to consider essential and indispensable.

But there yet remains to be noticed the strongest proof, indirect though it be, of the existence of armorial bearings at the Conquest; and it is afforded by this undeniable fact, which does not appear to have been noticed, viz., that in the middle of the twelfth century, when, it is contended, arms were first introduced into England, the descendants of those Normans who came in with the Conqueror, are found to *possess the same bearings as their third and fourth cousins in Normandy, and other provinces of France*. That is the case with the Courtenanys, the D'Oyleys, the Stutevilles, and a host of others; and where it is not it will be found that a change of arms has taken place by marriage with an heiress, or for some other good reason. How can this remarkable coincidence be explained, except by a reference in both cases to a remote common origin? Would the Anglo-Norman nobles go over to France and hunt out their obscure and distant relatives, to borrow from them, their own newly-assumed heraldic devices? The idea is preposterous. Yet it must have been so, or a most miraculous coincidence, must have occurred, not in one or two solitary instances, but in thousands of cases, with families of the same name and lineage; *or else* the heralds of both countries must have hit upon such a vast scheme of invention, as human ingenuity never equalled for consistency and veri-similitude.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The sceptical writers on heraldry speak of all coats of arms anterior to the Crusades, and all English ones prior to the twelfth century, as "fictitious" and "fabulous," amongst which latter are classed the "pretended" arms of the Anglo-Saxon kings; and of course the White Horse of Kent and the very existence of Hengist, its bearer, are considered apocryphal. But it frequently happens that they couple these denials with other admitted facts that by implication establish the probability, if not the truth, of the thing in question. Thus Mr. Lower (Cur. of Her. p. 309) gives the arms of the county of Cornwall, viz., Sable 15 bezants, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, remarking, "this coat is pretended to be derived from Cadock, or Cradock, earl or duke of Cornwall in the fifth century." He then

gives a long list of Cornish families in whose arms are to be found the bezants, beginning with those of Roger Valetorte, who married Joan the daughter of Reginald de Dunstanville (who was created Earl of Cornwall 1140), who surrounded his paternal arms with a *bordure sable bezantée*. Why was this done, except to show his derivation from the Earls of Cornwall and *their right* to use the ancient arms of the duchy, just as the fleurs-de-lis long time remained in the arms of the kings of England to indicate their right to the crown of France. Now these arms, it will be observed, were used in the very infancy of the practice, according to Mr. Lower and others; any earlier derivation of these bezants would therefore have been as absurd, at that day, as the ascription in the present, of the invention of the

One more singular fact must be added, that strengthens this argument, and affords strong presumption, if such were wanted, that armorial bearings, were in use for centuries *among our Saxon ancestors*. But this would not be questioned, if the theory advanced, making the Teutonic tribes the originators of the practice, be admitted. The fact, however, is the historical one, of the banner borne by Hengist in the fifth century when he set foot on our shores, being emblazoned with the well-known *White horse of Kent*. The almost entire absence of the horse as an armorial bearing in all the early Norman shields, would be remarkable, except upon the theory here propounded, viz. that after the most prominent objects in the animal world were chosen as personal devices by the heads of tribes, the creation of coats of arms, from generation to generation, was made by *composition* and *development* of these and other *primitive elements*; not that new ones did not now and then arise, as perhaps the fleur-de-lis<sup>17</sup> and the

electric telegraph to the times of the Crusades. This, then, is but another indirect proof of the early existence of armorial bearings.

The heralds of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are charged with most of the fabrications of arms and genealogies which cannot, in the present day, be authenticated. No doubt many venal forgeries, to flatter the vanity of *parvenus*, may be brought home to them; but the greater part of their errors arose from the same causes as prevailed long before their time, continue in action at the present day, and always will, viz., oral and written confusion of names and dates, taking conjectures for facts, hasty conclusions and imperfect knowledge. Thus, Thierry speaks of the "three lions of Normandy," whereas William the Conqueror bore only two; and Worsæ, in his 'Danes in England,' makes the notoriously unfounded assertion "that the lion was not, nor is indeed at present, found in coats of arms in England." Similar errors in Saxon and Norman historians have doubtless given rise to much of the proved erroneous blazonry and genealogy which are to be met with in old writers, but they could not be greater than are to be found in professedly genealogical works of the present day.

The preposterous incredulity of current

criticism in a very flippant manner stigmatizes every coat of arms and every genealogical statement that are not corroborated by the best existing documentary evidence as the "inventions" of the heralds of the reigns of the Tudors and the Stuarts, as if it were not a fact that a mass of writings of all kinds, accessible to them, has perished, or is buried in obscurity. But fortunately for their reputation, a collation of facts and constant discoveries of documents is continually establishing the truth of their assertions. Thus, statements in Collins and authors of his time, that the writers of this century have sneered at, investigation proves in most cases to be true. As a specimen of the rigidly demonstrative reasoning exacted in the present day, Mr. Planché, in a paper on the arms of the Ferrers family, brands the horse shoe bearings, one of their reputed coats, as an "invention" of the heralds, because he cannot find such a blazon assigned to the name in any of the rolls of arms that *happen to have come down to us*, forgetting that there are hundreds of ancient coats not recorded in any existing roll of arms, and that a family frequently relinquished their ancient bearings on assuming those of a heiress allied by marriage.

<sup>17</sup> The fleurs-de-lys, there is little doubt, are the *armes parlantes* chosen by one of the early kings of France of the name



ermine of the dukes of Bretagne,<sup>18</sup> but every new coat was *compounded* of existing materials, varied infinitely by colour, position, attitude, dimidiation, multiplication,<sup>19</sup> &c. *no entirely new charge being introduced that had been already appropriated.* Now, the horse, it may be imagined, would be one of the first devices assumed by a warrior; and, according to the theory, Hengist would have inherited *his* device from its original bearer, unless he or his ancestors had acquired it by marriage or otherwise.<sup>20</sup> Supposing, as is probable, the horse entered largely into the bearings of the Anglo-Saxon nobles; as those nobles were for the most part deprived of their possessions at the Conquest, and everything Saxon degraded and despised, the non-introduction of the horse and other Saxon ensigns into Anglo-Norman heraldry may be accounted for in part; but chiefly, from the Normans having a different immediate origin to the Saxons, and therefore descended from those who bore different bearings, such as the lion (so common

of Louis, perhaps by Louis the son of Charlemagne. The water-flags and the spear-heads, said also to have been the arms of that kingdom, are probably pictorial *corruptions* of the lilies, as the lions of England are supposed to be of the original leopards. The arms of France are also said to have been, at different times, crescents, bees, three diadems, and three toads; changes made by different races and by sovereigns of the same race, and similar to the changes in the royal arms of England from the earliest times, and to those in France itself during the last sixty years.

<sup>18</sup> According, however, to the Ency. Metrop. before quoted, the furs in heraldry are to be traced to the ancient Germans, an opinion arrived at from this passage of Tacitus:—*Eligunt feras, et detracta velamina spargunt maculis pellibusque belluarum quas exterior Oceanus atque ignotum mare gignit.*

<sup>19</sup> The lords of Montpellier bore *argent one torteau gules*; the *three torteaux* of the Courtenays, Earls of Bolougne, was probably an extension of this device, and the family of the same lineage. Innumerable instances occur in English heraldry where this multiplication of charges can be traced in a family; thus the Herveys bore originally one trefoil, then three, and finally three trefoils on a bend; and the Gernons bore at first one stag's head ca-

boshed; on the marriage, temp. Edward II, of Roger de Gernon with the heiress of Potton, lord of Cavendish, that name was assumed, and three stag's heads instead of one were adopted as a new family escutcheon.

Or for the field and azure for the charge seem to have been, in the original choice of colours, those preferred; they are the tinctures in the escutcheons of most of the ancient families of Europe, in the *elder line*, as Vermandois, the Dukes of Brabant, &c.; wherever other colours, or these reversed, are met with in royal and noble houses, as in those of England and France, or in less noble families, it may be safely presumed the descent is from a junior branch, or the early rules of choosing colours have been departed from, or some irregularity has taken place.

<sup>20</sup> It seems more probable that Hengist derived his name from the device of his standard or shield than the converse, and that like Hugh Lupus and the Dauphin of France (the latter of whom was so called from the dolphin on his shield), he was of noble blood; and the horse might not have been an hereditary bearing, but assumed by him as an original emblem. It is well known that in the later periods of chivalry many knights bore as new names those of their armorial bearings.

in English blazonry), the eagle, the ordinaries, and other simple devices. But still, the horse as an heraldic charge is to be found plentifully in German coat armour ; one of the emblems of the house of Hanover being a *horse courant*.

To conclude. As it is hardly probable that any discoveries will hereafter be made, of a nature, or of an extent, to satisfy the scepticism of those whom nothing will content but positive proof, the claims of heraldry to an early origin must always rest on circumstantial evidence ; and this, when the subject is thoroughly considered, is so strong, so cumulative, as to amount almost to demonstration. Indeed, it would be possible, by great labour and research, to make out such a *reductio ad absurdum* as to be unanswerable. Were a vast genealogical table prepared of the nobles and knights of Europe, down to the twelfth century, with the arms attributed to them affixed, such a result would be exhibited as would be entirely opposed to all preconceived notions. We should look for the crown, the sceptre, and the sword, on the escutcheons of kings, and princes, and dukes ; and on those of great functionaries of state, appropriate symbols of office. We should expect to find an array of devices drawn from the whole animal and vegetable kingdom, and of every object under the sun, typical of moral and physical qualities ; and not such unmeaning marks as the chevron, the fess, and the bend. These latter, however, it is contended are "refinements," subsequently introduced, as additional distinctions : but they stand alone, as well as in composition, and constitute some of the most ancient coats. In all the instances, ancient and modern, where we know the *origin* of personal emblems, there is some significance in the choice, and often some romantic incident at the bottom of it. The crescent, the escallop, and the cross, so prevalent in crusading coats, have an obvious allusion. Canting arms have a meaning, as in the wolf's head of Hugh Lupus ; and the *pelicans* of the *Pel-hams* ;<sup>21</sup> the crozier in

<sup>21</sup> Canting arms are ranked by Dallaway, Porny, and other writers, as of the lowest class in their origin, and as assumed by upstarts. This notion Mr. Lower and others do not admit, adducing many of such which are of great antiquity, and borne by very ancient families. Probably all significant armorial bearings of this

kind were in most cases, and especially by barbarians, intended as pictorial representations of the personal or mental qualities of those who assumed them, and who by such superiority had arisen from a humble position to that of a military leader. The arms of the kingdom of Leon are a lion ; probably it was founded

the arms of an abbot, the mitre in those of a bishop, the sprig of hop in the shield of a hop-grower, the shuttle in that of a manufacturer, are personal characteristics. The devices assumed, too, at tournaments had a similar personal expression. If therefore the modern heraldry of Europe, originated in the twelfth or even in the eleventh century, analogy would lead us to expect an ingenious profusion of significant objects, where there was such a wide field of selection. In the blazonry of all Europe there is undoubtedly great variety; but the ordinaries, and parti-coloured shields form a large proportion, and the occurrence of lions and eagles is prodigious; whilst the swan, the fox, the stag, the wolf, the hare, and the greyhound, are comparatively rare, and an infinite variety of excellent devices are scarcely if at all to be met with. The lion is the predominant bearing in Anglo-Norman heraldry, whilst the horse is nearly, if not quite, unknown. In explanation of this, it is insufficient to say that several would choose the same device: the object of these ensigns was *distinction*, and this in the first instance would be easy, infinitely more so, than three centuries afterwards, when a much larger number of coats, each distinct, existed in England alone, than in all Europe at an early period. The premises, then, do not lead us to the conclusion that we should *à priori* expect. But take the other hypothesis. Assume that all these diverse and heterogeneous ensigns have in their germs subsisted through ages,—are the gradual extension and development through centuries, of the hereditary emblems of the earliest races, and semi-barbarous chieftains of mankind, transmitting the ensigns of their glory, along with the mysterious symbols of their religion:<sup>22</sup> *assume*

by a victorious warrior whose name and whose device were a lion, and received its name and national arms from him. Such, in most cases, was the origin of the names and national arms of states.

Allusive arms, or *armes parlantes*, seem thus, in ancient and modern times, to have been adopted by all *novi homines*, for those entitled to hereditary arms would not, in any age, hardly capriciously relinquish them, but would assume others only for some special reason. In modern heraldry it is remarkable that the great majority of families bearing canting arms cannot be traced as descendants of men of noble blood; the first progenitor is fre-

quently to be found to owe his rise to ecclesiastical nepotism, and as a feudal tenant of an abbey or bishopric, or as a recipient of the favour of his sovereign, or as a man acquiring wealth by commerce or marriage. Such persons, unless they could appropriate the uxorial coat, if any there were, had no alternative but to adopt something entirely new, and yet in some manner personal; so, as far as they could, they made *pictures of their names*.

<sup>22</sup> "The heraldry of Europe has evidently derived its origin from the east, and it was intimately associated with religion and superstition. Maurice ob-

an unbroken continuity,<sup>23</sup> irregular it may be, and subject to fluctuating laws, of such of these, as belonged to conquering tribes (those of subjugated nations being in part rejected and in part adopted) especially of the Northmen and the Teutons ;—and, in their domination, and dispersion, in the rise of the feudal system,<sup>24</sup> of tournaments and the crusades, we have a solution of the problem, which no phalanx of chroniclers and heralds, however inventive, and even confederate, could have accomplished, in producing, such multifarious and consistent fabrications, as the reputed blazonry of the eleventh and preceding centuries.

serves that by the same hardy race—the descendants of the Tartar tribes, which tenanted the north of Asia—were introduced into Europe armorial bearings, which were originally nothing more than hieroglyphical symbols, mostly of a religious allusion, that distinguished the banners of the potentates of Asia. The eagle belongs to the ensign of Vishnoo, the bull to that of Siva, and the falcon to that of Rama. The sun rising behind a recumbent lion blazed on the ancient ensign of the Tartars, and the eagle of the sun on that of the Persians. The Humza, or famous goose, one of the incarnations of Boodha, is yet the chief emblem of the Burman banners. The Russians, no doubt, had their standard from the eastern nations ; it is the type of Garuda. The Islamites took the crescent, a fit emblem of a rising or declining empire and of their primeval worship.”—From a paper read at a Meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, March 19, 1835, (*Gent's Mag.*, April, 1835, p. 415).

<sup>23</sup> Guizot has shown, in his ‘Civilization in Europe,’ that the Roman laws, institutions, arts, manners, and customs, did not expire with the extinction of the empire, but were incorporated by all the nations who succeeded them, and are perpetuated to the present day. Indeed, the loose and hasty deductions of the past race of historians have engendered notions that it is really wonderful should so long have been entertained, when no very profound reflection, when the analogy of current events, would suffice to show their unsoundness, if not absurdity. We have been accustomed to believe that a conquering army, settling in a subjugated

country, has swept away the people, laws, language, and customs, and left nothing but a *tabula rasa*, whereon, like another Australia, history should begin *de novo* to write her annals. The idea, therefore, of a mediæval family being of ancient Roman lineage, as the Corbets, presumed descendants of Corvinus, has been ridiculed, and much more so have any pretensions of the inheritance of coat-armour from Roman families, or even from Danish or Saxon. But there is no such *break*, as this discontinuance would imply, in human affairs. It is obviously absurd to suppose that many Romans did not remain in Britain after it ceased to be governed by Rome, and transmit their names and the habits of their people. Customs may gradually die out and be superseded by new ones, but the universal custom of family names and (in fact) of family ensigns is probably, of all customs, the most tenacious and unchanging in its objects ; all history, national, family, and individual, showing that change therein is made with difficulty and little thought of, except from some strong motive or on a fitting occasion. As one language is but a corruption of another, and rises, as it were, out of its ruins, so, reasoning from generals to particulars, there is little doubt that not a small part of our family nomenclature consists of British and Roman names Anglicised.

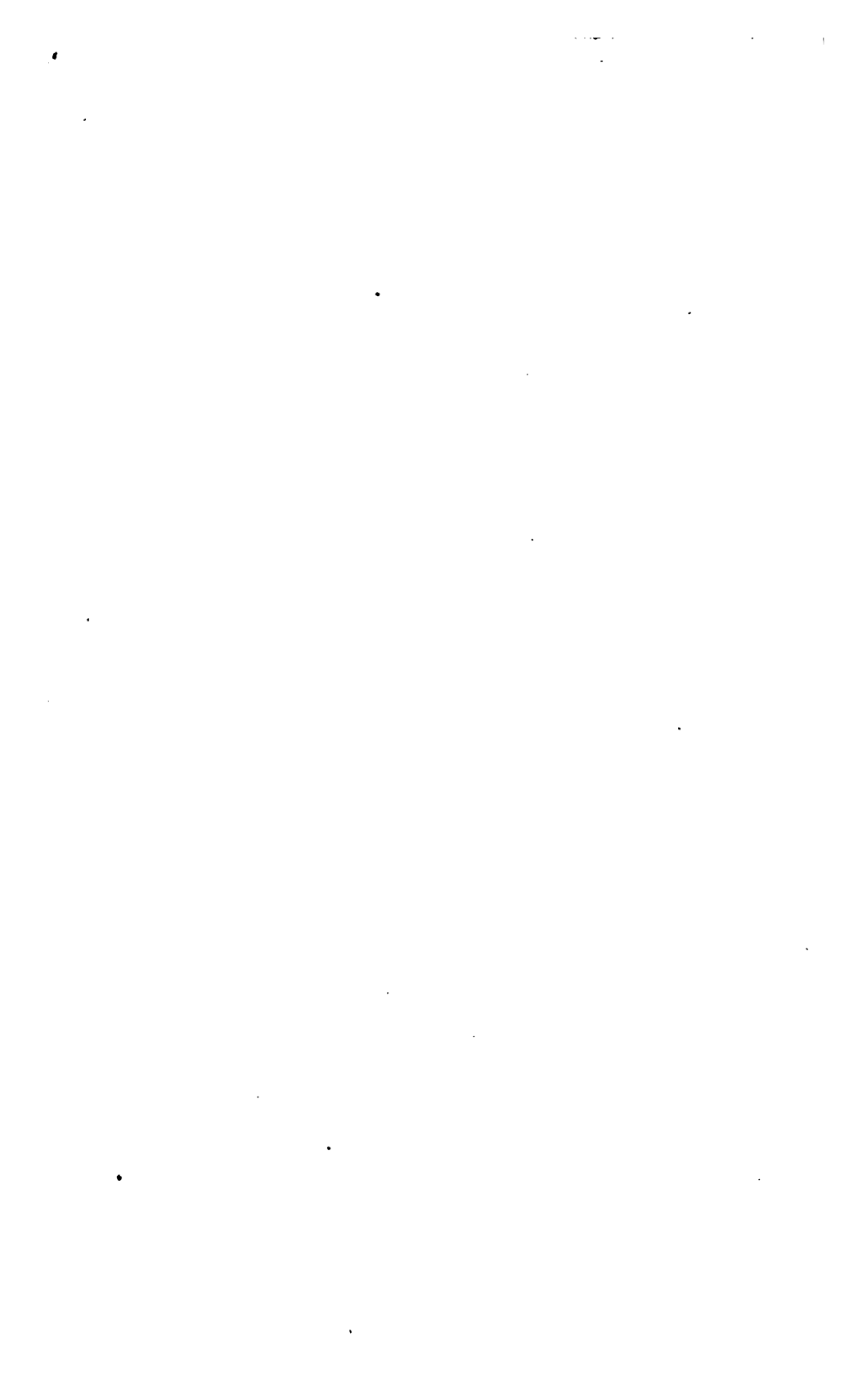
<sup>24</sup> In a previous note it has been shown that the formation of coats of arms, one from the other, was wholly independent of the feudal connection, but the *feudal system* undoubtedly gave a great impetus to the more extended use and frequent display of pre-existent coat-armour.

The 'Curiosities of Heraldry,'<sup>25</sup> indicate a *Philosophy of Heraldry* that has yet to be written. Like Philology, Zoology, Ethnology, and other sciences, it illustrates the sublime law of Development. Investigated in the spirit of Geology, combining the discovery of isolated facts with speculations as to their relation and common origin, it will render no small service in contributing to prove the connection of families and races up to remote and obscure periods, and thus throw a light on the history of mankind that might be obtained from no other source.<sup>26</sup> The studies and tastes of the age happily tend to advance this kind of knowledge, and they could have received no grander homage than is presented in that magnificent temple of heraldry, the New Palace of Westminster.

<sup>25</sup> The excellent and highly illustrated work of Mr. Lower, 'The Curiosities of Heraldry,' which enters more into the philosophy of the subject than any other, contains a very interesting appendix, illustrating the causes and modes of change in coat armour at early periods. But unfortunately for the doctrines enunciated in the body of the work, the heraldic genealogy of the Cobham family there given, completely contradicts them, and supports the views advanced in this essay. The arms there given were borne (though not so stated), it will appear, from critical examination of the document, assisted by a reference to the Kentish historians, *at the time of the Conquest*, and for several generations afterwards unchanged. If not, the same singular coincidence will appear, or the same wonderful ingenuity of the heralds must have been at work, as we have seen must characterise the whole ancient blazonry of England and Normandy.

<sup>26</sup> The Scandinavians came from the east, as their heraldry indeed would prove, and moreover its extreme antiquity, for the lion, which enters so largely into their blazonry, would be unknown to the

aboriginal inhabitants of the shores of the Baltic. Other barbarian races in the same way may be traced to countries which furnished the objects of their ensigns. "Among the North American Indians symbols are employed for the purpose of distinguishing their tribes. The Shawanese nation, for example, was originally divided into twelve tribes, which were subdivided into septs or clans, recognized by the appellation of the Bear, the Turtle, the Eagle, &c. In some cases individuals, particularly the more eminent warriors, formerly assumed similar devices, commemorative of their prowess. "And this," says Mr. Taylor, an American antiquary, "is *Indian heraldry*." Gibbon considers the Germans described by Tacitus as aborigines; this is doubtful, though their shields, by their absence of any devices drawn from the animal kingdom, do not indicate their original seat. The rude simplicity of their distinctions would imply their inability to imitate, by drawing, any expressive devices, and such plain patterns on their shields were probably the earliest ornaments on their surface, and common to all barbarians in the infancy of their civilization.













FEB 18 1882

MAR 9 1882

APR 29 1885

APR 20 1886

NOV 27 1893

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